

John A. Carver, Jr. Oral History Interview – JFK#7, 11/18/1969
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Biographical Note

Carver was Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Public Lands Management from 1961 to 1964, Under Secretary of the Interior from 1965 to 1966, and Commissioner of the Federal Power Commission from 1966 to 1972. In this interview Carver discusses the difficulties in how the Department of the Interior worked with Congress; instances when the White House needed to step into these congressional dealings; and several different members of the United States House of Representatives and their relationship both with him personally and with the Department of the Interior professionally, Wayne N. Aspinall and Michael J. Kirwan in particular, among other issues.

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John A. Carver, Jr. – JFK #7

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Seventh Oral History Interview

With

JOHN A. CARVER, JR.

November 18, 1969
Washington, D.C.

By William W. Moss

For the John F. Kennedy Library

MOSS: All right, on the Congress. Let me start with something rather early, and that was the operations of Frank Smith's [Frank E. Smith] Natural Resources Advisory Council. This was something that—as I understand it from his book—he sort of ginned up himself in the early days of the campaign and offered as his offering to the Kennedy [John F. Kennedy] campaign. Is this substantially your view of it?

CARVER: Well, that's my view of it, although my knowledge of it was contemporaneous. I wasn't involved in that aspect of the campaign. I knew about it, but only as reading it in the paper, and what role or how it affected the formation of the new Administration, I'm not exactly sure. I know that Frank Smith is one of the really

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knowledgeable, understanding types of the Congress, and with his Southern background, he was in a particularly good position to give some good advice. But I'd have to say that at that era, at least, I knew very little about it.

MOSS: All right. I just included that here because he happened to be a

congressman at the time.

CARVER: He didn't happen to be a congressman after that, though.

MOSS: No. What was it, '62, I believe he was bounced out. In an earlier interview you said that the White House left the matter of legislative relations pretty much up to the Department. On what sort of issues would Larry O'Brien [Lawrence F. O'Brien] and others get into the act on the Hill?

CARVER: Well, we had White House involvement when you got down to the final crunch on some of the bigger conservation issues. I certainly think that the Wilderness Bill and later, much later, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, that sort of thing, were basic Administration matters. I don't think the early years were marked by this generalized legislation so much as kind of specific bills—park bills or things like that.

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Those things generally don't come down to the point of requiring a big drive until they get broadened out quite a bit beyond the Department of the Interior, at which point we kind of lose track of them. But you know, on the day-to-day relationships, keeping the Congress with us, it's a matter of working with Kirwan [Michael J. Kirwan] and with Aspinall [Wayne N. Aspinall] and with Anderson [Clinton P. Anderson] and later with Jackson [Henry M. Jackson] and so on. It was pretty much Udall's [Stewart L. Udall] responsibility.

MOSS: Oh, what about something like the Organic Act on the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, which, at least by implication, cut across a number of departments?

CARVER: Well, in terms of our calling upon or needing the White House on it, I guess maybe we did, but not in the traditional sense of working with the Congress, but rather in getting an Administration consensus on it, getting a consistent Administration position. The real problems were within the Executive branch; that is, the problems which required the White House to take a hand, to referee, in effect, some of the warring contentions within those

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parts of the government that were affected by it. For example, the Corps of Engineers were very negative on many aspects of this outdoor recreation program (the charging of the fees and so on), and this matter had to be handled—we had to have help from the White House. But I don't think, after you got that worked out, I don't think the problems on the Hill were all that great, where, you know, you bring O'Brien into it.

MOSS: Okay. Let me turn that same one around and ask if the people in Congress

were aware of the infighting in the Executive branch on this particular issue...

CARVER: Oh, certainly they were.

MOSS: ... and how did this affect your relationship with Congress in trying to get the bill through?

CARVER: Well, the Corps of Engineers group up there was always a strong one, and there was a considerable amount of overlapping between those people who were on public works committees and therefore pretty well tuned in to the Corps of Engineers philosophy and those which were on Interior, and therefore pretty well tuned in to the Interior Department philosophy. But your basis question

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is: Did you have to have the White House kind of turn the screws on up for one side or the other on the Hill? I suppose indirectly you did; the word had to get out as to which way the Administration was going. The Forest Service and the Corps of Engineers could still do a certain amount of undercutting and did...

MOSS: In what ways did they do this?

CARVER: Well, even after you get an Administration position pretty well set, guys like Ed Edmondson [Edmond A. Edmondson], to just pick one example, could talk to somebody from the Corps and say, "Well, what do you really think?" or "What do you think personally?" or that sort of thing. And you continue to have trouble even though the official position downtown might be all leveled out. Well, that stuff goes on all the time; that never ends.

MOSS: Right. What sort of issues or what one issue would you consider the most difficult you had in driving through Congress?

CARVER: Well, that's a very difficult question. I never had really thought of it, I guess, in terms of what were the biggest problems. I suppose most students of the period would say that the

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Wilderness Bill was the biggest early one. And of course after we got into the water business, later, why, we had some water issues which got to be pretty national in character and therefore bigger issues.

MOSS: All right, let's talk about those two for a moment or two then. How did you go about working on the Wilderness Bill and getting it through

Congress?

CARVER: Well, the Wilderness Bill was in its very, very late stages of legislative activity by the time we came into office. The President announced his support of the idea fairly early, and I think, therefore, this became then a legislative possibility which it hadn't been before without a kind of an Administration position for it. The whole thing, the forces against it were powerful enough to have stopped any legislation. But once it became clear that there was going to be some kind of wilderness legislation, then the principal issue became what kind.

And on this the key man was Aspinall. But there were some pretty sensible guys on the Wilderness lobbying aide, guys like Spencer Smith [Spencer M. Smith] and others,

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who saw that it was important to get the legislation as best they could. On the Hill, Clinton Anderson, of course, had been for it for years, so he kind of took up the position of being the principal proponent and trying to get as much as could be accomplished, whereas the House side had the hold-back attitude. So they had to work out these compromises about what kind of legislative procedures would be involved for new areas and what the rights would be for the mining and all of these other things. When it finally fell into place; I think it was a pretty big favorable vote, a far more favorable looking vote than the whole thing had been in the process; that is, than it had been actually, considering the powerful forces.

MOSS: Did Interior, when you came in, draw up, or in conjunction with the proponents on the Hill, draw up a general strategy for getting the bill through?

CARVER: I don't really believe there was any further Interior strategy than giving full credence to Aspinall's assurance that there would be a Wilderness Bill. He was attacked and vilified

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for saying.... Well, he was just disbelieved, that's all. But we believed him. And so then it was a matter of accommodating to the sensitivities which had been built up. It was a pretty difficult issue for many of those Western, development-oriented type congressmen. They did have a problem in going for it. A lot of careful kind of maneuvering of these forces had to be done, and so I guess the principal strategy, as I now recall it, was to give them maneuvering room, to not be too doctrinaire, not push too hard, don't jump in too much on the side of the doctrinaires in favor of the Wilderness Bill, but to kind of play it cool. And I guess that's the way it worked out, too.

MOSS: Okay, now I'm going to try and draw something together here. It looks from what you've been saying that: (one) The White House sort of left

things up to Interior, and in a way Interior left things up to specific people on the Hill. Is this fair?

CARVER: That's fair enough. Particularly at that early time, the Secretary was still very much the Congress man. He, of course, knew everybody up

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there; he still regarded himself as a congressman being Secretary of the Interior, rather than being Secretary of the Interior who was once a congressman. I'd say that the point that I just made a moment ago that such grand strategy as there was, was to take the assurances when they finally came through that there would be a wilderness bill at face value and proceed on that assumption. It would have been a terrible situation if the Department had gotten whipsawed on that matter, and of course it didn't.

MOSS: There would have been a definite danger to the Department's prestige if it had gotten involved in the fight?

CARVER: Well, it got involved in the fight, but if it had gotten in the position in effect of cutting its good congressional relations by overplaying the wilderness issue, that's at least as I recall it now. It had to be a little bit cozy about it; it had to take a few brickbats and slings. It was about this time that this rather painful article in *Atlantic* [*Atlantic Monthly*] or *Harper's* came out criticizing Aspinall. And this hit us like a ton of bricks because we didn't believe that thesis and not

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believing it, we were devastated because we felt that if Aspinall should react as he properly might, he possibly might, that we'd had something to do with it, why, the fat would be in the fire.

MOSS: Is this the article you're talking about, this....

CARVER: Yes, I think it is; Julius Duscha's article ["The Undercover Fight Over the Wilderness"].

MOSS: There are a couple of...

CARVER: What was the date of that?

MOSS: That is April 1962, and it's *Harper's*, yes. This is something interesting that you're talking about here, because a lot of the critics of the Kennedy Administration have said that the Administration and Kennedy himself were far too concerned with maintaining these congressional relations, that those who were against them were going to be against them no matter what, and that the job, really, as the

critics saw it, was to put pressure on Congress to get things through and not worry so much about making enemies.

CARVER: Well, I just think that is a false premise, and I think the record of the Kennedy Administration demonstrates its falsity. You know, that was not a liberal Congress, and we didn't have all that many votes, and Kennedy hadn't won by that big a margin, and in the places where we needed the votes, he

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hadn't gotten any votes at all. But President Kennedy had an enormous influence with Aspinall on a strictly personal basis. I think he's the only President ever that was really well-regarded by such a truly congressional type as the gentleman from Colorado.

MOSS: You mentioned this before. What was the origin of this relationship, do you know anything about it?

CARVER: Well, I think it was basically personal. They'd had adjoining offices at one time, when President Kennedy had been in the House. I never really understood it, but I was always conscious of it.

MOSS: In what ways did it make itself known?

CARVER: Well, the correspondence which took place between the President and Aspinall which led up to the Public Land Law Review Commission was a genuinely personal matter so far as Aspinall was concerned. This was a vindication of his view that Kennedy really understood both him and the Congress. I've heard Aspinall mention it. And I've heard Aspinall speak several times of calls which he had had from President Kennedy, and he obviously

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valued them because I never heard of him speak of these White House calls in the same reactive way that he spoke of calls from other Presidents. He felt that Kennedy respected him, not as a person—although he certainly did—but more that he respected his position as a member of Congress, and as the Chairman of the Committee. I can't emphasize too much how important I think this was in those years, this feeling of admiration and respect and regard which the Chairmen had for the President. Really quite unusual because, you know, there really wasn't much in common from the Massachusetts background of Kennedy and the schoolteacher, Western, humble beginnings background of Aspinall.

MOSS: You say it's unusual. Do you know of any other instances in which there was a personal relationship between the President and a committee chairman in which it worked to the Administration's advantage?

CARVER: Well, I would say that—you mean during the Kennedy years? I really don't know. I am confident that kind of relationship did not exist, let's say, between the President and Anderson or between

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the President and Jackson when he took over the Chairmanship of the Senate Committee. As to what might have been the situation with respect to other chairmen around the Hill, I don't know. And it might have been basically one-sided; maybe I'm much more reflecting Aspinall's feeling toward the President than I am the President's feeling toward Aspinall. The President was so good about this thing that he would sense it and handle it right without maybe being that involved with it.

MOSS: How about the opposite? Any strong antipathies?

CARVER: I wouldn't be able to say. I wasn't that close to just exactly how the President felt about senators or congressmen. I would draw a blank on that.

MOSS: Okay. How about now let's put Udall in the same position as the President—not in the presidency, but vis-à-vis congressmen. How did Aspinall and Udall relate?

CARVER: Well, not all that well. Not from the beginning—

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they were a great team for a good part of the time, but it never was this kind of unstinting sort of relationship that I've tried to indicate existed between Aspinall and President Kennedy.

The Chairman had never been that much of an admirer of the Secretary's performance as a member of his Committee. Aspinall sets a great deal of store by homework and careful and methodical preparation. Udall had had a lot of irons in the fire when he was in Congress, and I think his work on Education and Labor had really been more important to him. So damned bright that he was able to keep up on the Committee, but he wasn't an Interior man. Consequently, I think Aspinall went out of his way at the very outset to make it clear that Udall's former connection with the Committee didn't give him any special *in* down at that end of the [Pennsylvania] Avenue.

And on the other hand, the Secretary was well aware that he didn't have this camaraderie which would make things really that easy, that

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he always had to be careful, and he always was careful. He understood Aspinall very well, handled him very well, but it wasn't all that—just automatic. Eventually, you know, at the

very, very end of the Johnson [Lyndon B. Johnson] administration, the good relationships of the preceding eight years, which basically had been good, just kind of went up in smoke because of these midnight orders which the Secretary signed, which Aspinall was very critical of. But that came much later. But basically that sort of illustrates that each went his own way.

MOSS: Let me talk about several congressmen. I have a long list here of individual people who were either ranking members of the committees, or heads of subcommittees, amounting to practically the same thing. We've talked about Aspinall a bit. Is there anything you want to add about him as a person, as a committee chairman during the years?

CARVER: Well, I think at other times I've told you that

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I'm heavily biased in favor of Aspinall because I regarded him—still do—as a very close friend. And he and I had, during that era, after a somewhat rocky start, you know, the very most cordial of relationships. I don't think there was anybody down in the Interior Department who had better relationships with Aspinall than I did. But that was pretty personal. But I think I've already discussed that with you in the past.

MOSS: How about John Saylor [John P. Saylor], the ranking Republican?

CARVER: Well, John is an absolutely unique guy. He was bluff and hardy and sometimes abrasive and insulting, and certainly, he had his phobias. He was a symbol of conservation and a darling of most of the conservation lobbies, which was rather odd for a ranking Republican in the Congress. He was not, however, a partisan for very many of the Department's programs. The Parks could do no wrong; Outdoor Recreation, the various conservation activities, Fish and

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Wildlife, particularly, he was always ready to stand up for and fight for. He hated the Bureau of Reclamation and almost everything connected with it. So he was a very uneven kind of a guy.

He did not maintain really a very disciplined side of the aisle on the Republican side, but most of his Republican colleagues didn't really care that much about it, so that he and Aspinall, working together on most issues, just took that Committee wherever they wanted to go. They'd have their spats and sometimes there'd be periods when they just hardly seemed to be speaking to each other, but by and large, they worked together quite well. They each understood the other.

I got along very well with John. I like him very much. He and Udall got along in many ways and on many issues much better than Udall and Aspinall did. They were on the

same wavelength on many, many things. And John never hesitated, really, to take a quite active role in some issues like wilderness and

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others, both against his Party and somewhat more openly in line with some of the lobbying groups, than almost anybody else would dare be. But it never bothered him any.

MOSS: You're talking about Udall and Saylor getting along very well; it reminds me of—I think the last time we were talking somewhat about the Easternization of Udall. What do you think were the origins of this transformation, if there was a transformation?

CARVER: Well, in terms of Udall, I would suppose that—I don't know what the origins were, but the symptoms of it were the Secretary's discovery of this what you might call intellectual under-pinning of the conservation movement, the old devoto tradition. It's a kind of an elitist sort of thing which really attracted him, as that sort of thing very often does for boys from the back country of the boondocks. And as he got in and involved with this thing on those terms he got a better sense of history

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and a better sense of larger issues than the development of Arizona or the building of dams. And of course, you know, the end product is what you see now, the ecologist rather than the developer. But as to what its origins were, I suppose it's just sort of the, maybe the exposure to the Kennedy Administration and people like Schlesinger [Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.] and Wally Stegner [Wallace E. Stegner] out at Stanford [University] and some of these conservation statesman...

MOSS: You would definitely date it during his term as Secretary, though?

CARVER: Oh yes, I certainly would, I certainly would. I don't think he really gave much of a damn about these issues when he was in the Congress. He was much more caught up with the Education and Labor kind of thing, at least that's my impression. He was, you know, fighting the battles for getting the people in Arizona their fair share of the water and the land when he was in Congress.

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MOSS: Okay, back to the congressmen. Leo O'Brien [Leo W. O'Brien].

CARVER: Leo was one of God's chosen people. We worked with him almost exclusively on the matter of the Territories, at least I did. He was extraordinarily good in understanding what the larger issues were in this area. Leo was too much an Albany politician to really care all that much about all these land

and other things which were involved, but he was a good soldier and stayed with the Chairman while he was in Congress. I would single out his leadership of the Territories Subcommittee as being really the hallmark of his success. Of course it was before we got there that he was really instrumental in getting the statehood bills through. But that's the kind of a guy he was.

MOSS: Did he seem to have a particular interest in say the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, as opposed to the others?

CARVER: I wouldn't say so. I think he may have had, but basically I think he was just dealing with

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this thing on its basic human and political merits. Guam and Samoa and the Virgin Islands represented to him a responsibility of the Congress laid out by the Constitution as to which he should become informed, and I think his instincts were very right.

MOSS: What were his instincts for instance in the handling of the VI Corp [The Virgin Islands Corporation] thing?

CARVER: Well, he felt that we were on the right track when we—at least as I recall it, he felt we were on the right track. He was somewhat skeptical when we said we were going to phase out of that. But he not only said that was a good policy, but wished us well and supported us in it.

MOSS: Walter Rogers [Walter E. Rogers]?

CARVER: Well, Walter Rogers was the head of the Irrigation and Reclamation part of the Committee's work, and that was an area that I was pretty much out of during that era, particularly. So I had very little contact with him. I knew and admired him, but in terms of the actual workings

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of the Department I saw him very seldom.

MOSS: James Haley [James A. Haley]?

CARVER: Well, Jim Haley is a man with whom I worked on a very close and friendly basis on the Indian matters and close but less friendly basis on Territorial matters. Jim is a very conservative-type Democrat, but when it came to Indian matters he was liberal in the sense of wanting to do what he could. He really had a far better attitude toward the Indians than most of those people on the Senate side.

MOSS: To what would you attribute this?

CARVER: Well, that's a good question. I guess maybe I'd say that it was kind of psychological, his basic kind of Americanism, his kind of a feeling that you ought to do that for these people. When you match the thing up with his very, very restricted view as to what we ought to do for the people in the territories, you just have to say that it was kind of an "America First" sort of idea, because the same things which would move him to

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really get things going on an Indian reservation, would just leave him absolutely cold with respect to needs in the territories.

MOSS: All right. Ed Edmondson. You said he gave you a rough time on the user fee thing that the...

CARVER: Well, Ed is a very, very able and conscientious congressman, and in his particular district of Oklahoma, the Corps of Engineers had a lot of projects, and he was on Public Works as well as Interior, so he had a lot of involvement in these matters. I don't say he gave us a rough time, he just had a different view and having a different view, he was able to do a great deal about it. Of course he was Chairman of the Mines and Minerals Subcommittee, and here again, I didn't have too much to do with him in his subcommittee chairman role because it was pretty much outside of my principal line of activity. But I think he's a very, very high-type congressman, and, you know, the Corps of Engineers is very fortunate to have a man like him agreeing with them.

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MOSS: Walter Baring [Walter S. Baring, Jr.]?

CARVER: I'm very fond of Walter Baring, but he's not a great, big man, except in a kind of a physical sense. He has risen to the chairmanship of the Public Lands Subcommittee, did quite early. I guess Gracie Pfof [Gracie B. Pfof] had it the first two years of the Kennedy Administration. She ran for the Senate, and I think Walter succeeded to that role. He's no great leader, so that the really effective chairman of his subcommittee was Wayne Aspinall, but Walter would go along. If Nevada interests were involved, he'd be diligent in supporting them. Basically conservative in his outlook, he still had some of the kind of Populist liberalism about him, too. Interesting guy, but not really all that significant in any of our work here. Nobody really paid a lot of attention to him. He wasn't ever a key figure. If you had a public lands matter, it was Aspinall that you were dealing with.

MOSS: How about Gracie Pfof?

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CARVER: Well, Gracie was out of her depth, too. I've known Gracie for many years, she's from my state. She didn't care all that much about, particularly in that era, about the work of the Congress, she was interested in being in the Senate. And it's just hard to remember that she had any very great impact of any kind. I guess maybe as unfair as it—un-chivalrous as it might seem, she was pretty much like Walter Baring. I suppose that's because Wayne—of all of the subcommittees, I think Wayne was personally involved more in Public Lands than any of the others.

MOSS: Thomas Morris [Thomas G. Morris]?

CARVER: Well, Tom wasn't there very long before he went over to Appropriations. He was a wheel-horse type; he worked hard at it. I think he had a good future on that Committee, but obviously he seemed to have a good future because they promoted him to Appropriations. He was pretty political in his views because he wanted to go to the Senate. But he didn't make it.

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MOSS: Ernest Wharton [J. Ernest Wharton]?

CARVER: Well, you would just have to say that he just knew who he was. He just had absolutely no impact the two years that he was there that I was in Interior on anything I ever had anything to do with.

MOSS: Okay. How about E.Y. Berry [Ellis Yarnal Berry]?

CARVER: Well, I knew E.Y. Berry pretty well because of course he'd once been head of the Indian Affairs Subcommittee and took a big role on the—he was really the ranking Republican right from the beginning. I guess Craig Hosmer [Chester Craig Hosmer] was there for a little while, and a couple of others may have ranked him, but he was the active one. He was kind of anti-Administration, but you could work with him. I always got along fine with him.

MOSS: And then in some of the other committees: for instance, Bob Jones [Robert E. Jones] over in Government Operations, who had Natural Resources and Power. I presume you had to go through him on the Organic Act for the Outdoor Bureau, didn't you?

CARVER: I don't think so. I don't think so. I think

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that bill cleared the Interior committees on both sides, as I recall it. John Moss [John E. Moss] was a man whose presence was generally felt. And certainly a Texas congressman.... Well, I'll think of his name in a minute. On the Government Operations.... He got interested in the Parks Service.

MOSS: Jack Brooks [Jack Bascom Brooks]?

CARVER: Jack Brooks was one of those stormy guys who threw his weight around quite a bit from the vantage point of another committee, particularly when it came to that whole great big rhubarb which we've discussed before of the concessions policy. He had a hell of an influence over that thing.

MOSS: What'd he do?

CARVER: Well, he in effect got a bill which had been passed by the Congress—let's see, I can't remember exactly how it was. But he almost forced the Administration to suspend the enforcement of a law until they could look at it again. I'd have to review my experience on that, but

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he took such a strong view that the concessioners were really taking advantage of the United States of America, he just blocked any kind of constructive activity in this area almost single-handedly for a long time. He was very influential in his particular area.

MOSS: How did you try to counter that?

CARVER: I went up and spent a couple of hours one time just telling him what we were going to do and just taking the most violent kind of abuse—I don't mean personal abuse, but really vigorous kind of a verbal assault upon me and on the Department and so on. But that's just what you have to do, you know. When you get that kind of a guy who's against you, you go up and meet him head-on; you don't allow him to do his work behind you any more than you have to. Jack Brooks and I get along now just fine; he remembers it and I do too.

But there wasn't too much of that. But Moss was another one who would get off on these

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projects and cause problems.

MOSS: For instance?

CARVER: Well, Moss had a fellow named Phineas Indritz working for him who had once worked in the Department of the Interior in the Solicitor's office, or

somewhere, and they were engaged for a long time in pursuing—I can't even remember what it was now, but it had something to do with land management decisions. I'll try to refresh my recollection on that, and we'll go over this again.

MOSS: When you knew you had an obstinate opponent like this on the Hill, did it come from you, the counter-attack, did it come from you individually, or did you kick it around in the Department first, say?

CARVER: Oh, we always kicked it around. We went over—you know, if we had problems of this kind, there would be many discussions as to what to do about it, and you'd really try to arm yourself with facts.

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MOSS: Who were the people who would get involved in these kick-around sessions?

CARVER: Well, basically the Secretary and Max Edwards [Max N. Edwards] and Bob McConnell [Robert C. McConnell] and whatever bureau would be involved—George Hartzog [George B. Hartzog, Jr.] was on a couple of these. Some of these, you know, we had to make decisions which they just simply would order us not to. That was the case with Brooks. We signed a contract with a concessioner which he told us we couldn't do. Well, we had our responsibilities as we've discussed before, and so the problem was to just go up and tell him, "Well, Mr. Congressman, that's it!"

MOSS: How did you decide who was the man to confront Brooks, for instance?

CARVER: Well, we always took the position that you always moved up a step wherever you had problems; you never moved down. And if it got to be a situation where the bureau chief wouldn't handle it, then the Assistant Secretary would take it on. And if you had a real problem, as we sometimes had

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with guys that were pretty much out of orbit, guys like Fulbright [J. William Fulbright] or McClellan [John L. McClellan] or somebody, why, then the Secretary would have to do the calling. He was very good about this thing. You know, almost everybody on the Hill will come down to see a Cabinet officer, but if he had a problem, he'd go up there. And they reacted to that very well, this kind of protocol business.

MOSS: All right. I asked you about Bob Jones, but we got off onto Jack Brooks.

CARVER: Well, I couldn't be able to give you what.... Such influences as Bob Jones had was more on other areas of the Department than I ever had much to do

with.

MOSS: Okay. How about Mike Kirwan?

CARVER: Well, there just isn't anybody more important to this whole business than Mike Kirwan. Mike for most of this period was the Chairman of the Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, and he and his staff

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assistant were just simply vitally important to the Department getting its budget; far more important than the Senate Appropriations Committee. And many, many, many significant policy issues were fought out at the Appropriations Committee level; you know, problems like building of additional facilities by Bonneville Power Administration, problems like funding the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, problems like limitations or restrictions on the Park Service's use of its money for roads or for design work or its concession policy.

We were aware right from day one that only half your job was with the legislative committee. The Appropriations Committee was much more important with our agency than with many others because in their reports they would deal with some of our matters in terms of appropriations directions down to even \$15,000 items. We lived with it and got along well with Mike, spent a lot of time working with him, buttering him up, if you will. He was more

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susceptible to that, although not in any venal sense.

MOSS: How do you go about buttering him up?

CARVER: Well, if you ever met or knew Mike Kirwan, you knew for one thing that he liked to be given public recognition for being really the author for almost everything good the Department had done in the preceding twenty years. So you gave him the opportunity to make—you gave him these tributes. We had a big old Mike Kirwan appreciation dinner one time down at the Department, which I said, before we had it, was—I said it would be counterproductive. Nobody could possibly help being offended at anything so blatant as this. And hell, it just worked fine; it was a huge success. You know, we had everybody get up and tell about their programs and what Mike had done with it. It was all done down at the Interior Department, so it didn't get all that public. But it was a huge success.

MOSS: Did you get other congressmen asking for the

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same thing?

CARVER: Oh, not much. That wouldn't work with very many. But Mike came out of pretty humble kind of beginnings, and he was proud of this Department, he had a great feeling for America, you know. And when these "investments," as we put them, "in America" you know, had these payoffs that you could see what had been done and could give him some concrete statistics on it and so on, this meant a great deal to him. A great, old man. He's very sick now.

I had a kind of a run-in with him at the very first part of the Administration which may be worth a note. His son and his son-in-law were both long-time employees of the Department of the Interior—perhaps I've told you about that before, have I?

MOSS: I think you mentioned the one in connection with the territories...

CARVER: John Kirwan [John J. Kirwan], yes.

MOSS: Right. There was another one in the Outdoor

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Recreations Bureau, I think it was, wasn't there?

CARVER: Well, at that particular time Bob Vaughan [Robert E. Vaughan], his son-in-law, was involved. And the word came to me that Bob Vaughan was to be my deputy. And I had other ideas. I suppose later I'd have said, "Yes sir, Mr. Chairman!", but at that time I said, "Hell no!", and made it stick. I guess it's a kind of a measure of just how effective the old man was, that both Kirwan and Vaughan were top-flight people that would have done a great job, but I was just terrified at the idea of having my deputy a man from the Appropriations Committee. I just felt that was just bad government. Well, we put him into a responsible role in the Indian Bureau, and he performed very well, very loyally and eventually got back over in the Assistant Secretary's office, where I'd refused to have him. But I didn't know him; there wasn't anything personal about it. But I just sent word back, you know, that—to the White House in that case, because that's

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where the pressure had come from.

MOSS: How about Clarence Cannon?

CARVER: Well as head of the Public Works Subcommittee, here again, like on most of the water matters, I didn't have too much to do with him, but, there's no question but what he was just as powerful as anybody up there and exerted a policy power above and beyond just a money power, you know. But I didn't have anything very direct with him.

MOSS: Okay. Let me round out this hour by asking about something that happened early, and that's the business of Udall's involvement in the House Rules Committee expansion vote. Did you get involved at all in this?

CARVER: No Sir, I certainly didn't, I certainly didn't get involved in that.

MOSS: Now, Charlie Halleck [Charles A. Halleck] screamed that Udall was trying to pressure Western Republicans...

CARVER: Yes, he is, he...

MOSS: Now, what sort of pressure can he put on, and did he do this, and how did he do it?

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CARVER: Well, the sorts of pressure that, of course, a Secretary can put on any congressman are really quite, quite significant. The question of how much money is spent in his district by the huge bureaus which have so much influence in these areas, you know, far wider than just a question of the building of big dams.... The location in Mile City, Montana, of a district office of the BLM [Bureau of Land Management] is just about equivalent to having a new post office there. That's important to these little towns. And many, many of these decisions are strictly at the Departmental level, you know, your field set-up and so on. So the Secretary can be influential at various levels.

Did he do it? I don't know. He tried. He was very strongly committed to breaking that stranglehold, at the time. What he did, I guess, was just to kind of threaten to, and I think kind of, Halleck got as good as he gave because—I can't remember what it was, but Udall had a comeback to him about the way he fought, which really gave, I

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think, Udall the benefit of that argument. But my first answer is the best one: I didn't know much about it.

MOSS: You don't think that this had any effect on congressional relations later?

CARVER: No, hell no. Those things come and go, especially a thing like the Rules Committee. It's a big deal when it's happening, but after that there's a lot of other things that are far more important than that.

MOSS: Okay, fine. We'll talk about the Senate some next time, then.

CARVER: All right.

MOSS: Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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